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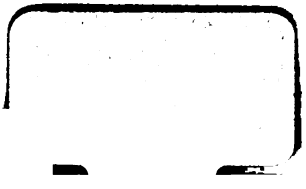

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UP FROM GEORGIA

By FRANK L. STANTON

Author of

"Songs of the Soil," etc.

New York

D. APPLETON & COMPANY

1902

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THE SINGERS

Chorus of singers, day by day—
  Thick in the world they throng;
But mark ye, masters! the weary way
  Is sweet for the sake of song!

Not song that soars to the heights above—
  That thrills through the vista'd years;
But it brings the light to the eyes of love,
  And is sweet with the gift of tears.

No song that pictures the battle-strife—
  For there are the singers grand;
There are greater deeds in the vales of life
  Than on heights where the heroes stand.

Chorus of singers! The world hath need
  Of the humbler strains that fall
On the wayside lone—on the paths that lead
  To the light that shines for all.

WEDDED

Well, you are wedded, and around your life
Twine two great joys; for some one calls you wife,
And child-lips murmur: "Mother!" and you smile
After long years of sorrow and heart-strife.

Smile up into the eyes that meet your own—
Feel the strong, sheltering arm around you thrown
And with the loveliest words of love you while
The hours away, no longer dark and lone.

You feel the clinging of your child; you feel
His arms about your neck; his kisses steal
Away the sigh that trembles to your lips
When faithful Memory doth some face reveal

From out the fading past; but tears or sighs
Are not for your sweet lips—for your bright eyes;
What earthly joy can now your joy eclipse?
For, choosing well, your love could be but wise.

And yet, I fancy that upon your brow
There is a faint, sad shadow resting now;
The bended head droops lower, till at last
Your weeping face in your pale hands you bow

And give yourself to grief! Is it not so?
A voice calls to you from the long ago—
A hand is stretched toward you from the past
And joy is lost in bitterness and woe!

You wonder why the tears your eyes should fill;
You whisper to your breaking heart: "Be still!"
But the heart moans with yearning unsufficed—
Vague yearning, which the world can never fill.

For women love but once; and if denied
That first, sweet love, they live unsatisfied,
Clinging to it as to the cross of Christ—
A cross whereon their hearts are crucified.

And this is life—the life which we must lead:
A life of dire distress and sorest need;
A life which longs, but vainly longs, for rest—
Rest for the hands that toil—the hearts that bleed.

Aye! this is life. Heaven's mercy on us, sweet!
Be it that you and I no more shall meet
Until the grass is green above the breast,
And God's white daisies grow at head and feet!

DOWN ON THE OLD PLANTATION

In spite of politics an' sich
A-worryin' of the nation,
We're doin' well in Georgy lan'
Down on the ol' plantation.
We're fixin' now fer cotton white—
To fleece the fiel's from left to right,
An' take ol' Georgy out o' sight
Down on the ol' plantation!

Ain't nothin' throws us out o' gear,
Or hinders our salvation;
We're good fer all the wear an' tear
Down on the ol' plantation.
We're workin' whilst it's called to-day
To meet the Good Times on the way,
An' life's a regular hooray!
Down on the ol' plantation.

Fer still the seasons as they go
Shout joy from every station,
The joy o' reapin' what we sow
Down on the ol' plantation.

Joy in the singin' o' the rills—
The mockin' birds, the whippoorwills;
We've struck the halleluia hills
Down on the ol' plantation!

THE WORLD-WAY OF THE SOUTH

Not lost in a languor of blisses,
In valleys sweet-breathing of bloom,
Though roses are fain of her kisses
And stars braid her brows in the gloom;
Though lilies lean to her and love her,
And the love-song is sweet in her mouth,
And the world green—the skies blue above her—
Sing the South! Sing the South! Sing the South!

In the strength of high faith she hath risen,
Her flag on her mountains unfurled;
She hath rent the great hills that imprison
The glittering wealth of a world.
With the thrill of a new life elated
The harvest its fruitfulness yields:
And the ships, far sea-faring, are freighted
With the fleece of her flowering fields.

Hers all the crowned hills of Endeavor,
The garlands, the triumphs of life;
Her voice is a clarion ever—
A battle-song heard in the strife;

With Freedom in fairest communion,
With Liberty facing the Fates,
Love-linked to the stars of the Union,
And the flag rippling over the States.

CHRISTMAS TIMES IN GEORGIA

Don't care how the cotton sells—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Hear the ringin' o' the bells—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Take your place, Miss Nancy-Lou,
Eyes like violets bright with dew!
Sugar is sweet, an' so are you—
  Christmas times in Georgia!

Don't care how the country goes—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Loud an' sweet the bugle blows—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Take your place, Malinda-Jane,
Curls as bright as April rain,
Lips as sweet as sugar-cane—
  Christmas times in Georgia!

Don't care how the fiddle plays—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Let the roarin' oak-fires blaze—
  Christmas times in Georgia!

Come from east, and come from west,
In your silks an' satins dressed,
Kiss the one you love the best—
  Christmas times in Georgia!

Balance to your partners all—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Lead the ladies round the hall—
  Christmas times in Georgia!
Roof is ringin'; snow an' sleet;
But the music's in your feet!
Girls 'll pay the forfeits sweet—
  Christmas times in Georgia!

IN AN OLD INN

A jolly landlord and a blazing fire;
Without the snow, the sleet.
Let the bleak winter wreak his heart's desire!
Here the old friends we meet.

While fast the shadows of the night are falling
No comfort shall we lack;
For is not Falstaff from a corner calling:
"Sirrah, a cup of sack?"

It is no time for grief—for melancholy;
Great tales there are to tell.
The "Sluggish Knight" drinks with the friar jolly—
Not from Saint Dunstan's well.

Trampling of feet—voices in hallways humming;
Here a tired traveller nods;
A trumpet sounds * * * "The coach—the coach is coming!—
O for a coach, ye gods!"

Care is a river, but we've crossed the ferry
To where the bright fields bloom.
Chaucer comes in with tales of Canterbury;
Room for the old man—room!

He scarce hath told the tale, sweet in the telling,
Ere a glad eye discerns
A gentler guest. A chorus glad is swelling:
"'Fore God, here's Bobby Burns!"

Was ever yet so wonderful a party?
Dash down, O wintry rain!
Clink glasses, O my masters. drink ye hearty
Until we meet again!

A SONG OF HER LOVER

I'm a-goin' to meet my lover at the grindin' of the cane—
At the grindin' of the cane,
At the grindin' of the cane;
He's comin' on his pony in a canter down the lane—
He passes all the purty girls, an' gives his pony rein;
Fer my lover's goin' to meet me,
My lover's goin' to meet me
At the grindin'—at the grindin' of the cane!

I'm a-goin' to meet my lover at the grindin' of the cane—
At the grindin' of the cane,
At the grindin' of the cane;
He gallops 'crost the medders—he canters down the lane,
With not a kiss fer Jenny, nor a wavin' hand to Jane;
Fer my lover's goin' to meet me,
My lover's goin' to meet me
At the grindin'—at the grindin' of the cane!

Who wouldn't wait to meet him as he rides—as he rides
To the grindin' of the cane,
To the grindin' of the cane;
With the foam, like snow, a-fallin' from his frisky pony's sides;
An' he'll be the best of husbands, an' I'll be the best of brides;
Fer my lover's goin' to meet me:
With a kiss of love he'll greet me
At the grindin'—at the grindin' of the cane!

AN OLD MAN'S MUSING

I

Ain't takin' no stock in the snow—it ain't what I
love an' admire;
I'm jest settin' here in a rickety chair an' smokin' my
pipe by the fire.
The trees are like skeletons white that shake in the
wind as it blows,
An' out in the black o' the night the hills they look
ghostly—Lord knows!

II

Ain't takin' no stock in the snow; but, somehow or
other, it seems
With its lonesome-like whiteness, to take me fur back
to the valley o' dreams;
An' I'm thinkin' o' friends that have left me—the
friends that I loved long ago,
Some of 'em fur an' divided, an' some lyin' under the
snow.

III

I'm thinkin' of how, by the fireplace, the good wife
was settin' that day
When the snowflakes was fallin', an' rosy the chil-
dren come in from their play;

When I had not a thought that I'd ever be settin' as lonesome as this,
Fur off from the love o' the children come in from the snow fer a kiss!

IV

But mother an' children—where are they? The mother went home long ago
To the place where the light is eternally bright, an' there's never no winter an' snow.
An' the children—they're fur from the home place, an' mostly fergittin to write,
An' that's why I'm feelin' so lonesome in the snow that is fallin' to-night!

V

But it's Life, an I ain't a-complainin', fer the Lord sent me skies that was fair,
An' I'm thankful to-night fer this fire's bright light an' the rest o' this rickety chair;
But I still fall to thinkin' an' sighin',—an' I reckon 'twill always be so,
Till Life's fire is a handful of ashes, an' I pass o'er the hills of the snow.

A MORNING SONG

I

Open wide the windows—
  The green hills are in sight,
Winds are whispering, "Violets!"
  And—there's a daisy white,
And, the great sun says "Good morning!" and the
    valleys sing, "Delight!"

II

Open wide the windows—
  Life will not let us rest!
A thousand airy messengers
  From rosy east to west
Are come with sweetest singing—with roses for
    Love's breast.

III

No more the white-browed Winter
  With stormy, wild alarms!
There's a poet listening—listening,
  Where a sense of music charms
Even the woman in the doorway with the baby in her
    arms.

IV

Take hands and meet the morning
On the hills—in valleys deep:
The Darkness was but dreaming
Where we felt the shadows creep.
Grief wakens on thè breast of Joy who sighed himself to sleep.

V

And the green of field and meadow,
And the enfolding blue above,
The clear call of the robin—
Silver-thrush and gray-winged dove,
Shall seem to us a recompense for lost, remembered Love!

VI

Open wide the windows!
Sweet smells the rain-blest sod;
The seed dreams of the harvest
And the color's in the clod;
And the whole world breathes the beauty of the Light and Love of God!

A LITTLE COT

It's a little cot
In a little spot,
With a little heaven has sent,
An' her hand in mine
In rain or shine,
An' I'm goin' my way content.

I'm goin' my way content,
With the blue skies over me bent;
An' the world is right, an' the world is wrong,
But my heart keeps singin' a thankful song.

It's a little way
From that cot each day
In the toilin' world I roam;
But the whole day long
That sweet heart-song,
And a kiss when the stars sing: "Home!"

A kiss for a welcome home,
When the bees are hid in the comb;
An' the world is right, an' the world is wrong,
But Love keeps singin' the same sweet song.

The same sweet song
Where the toilers throng
An' the skies are cold an' gray;
For I hear the beat
Of her heart so sweet,
Callin' me—far away!

Callin' me—far away
To the blooms an' the bells o' May;
An' the world is right, an' the world is wrong,
But her heart keeps singin' that same sweet song.

An' the little cot
In the little spot
Is dearer than domes that rise;
For the day is bright
An' the night is light
With the love in a woman's eyes.

With the love in a woman's eyes—
A love that never dies;
An' the world is right, an' the world is wrong,
But Love keeps singin' the same sweet song.

THE WAY OLD GLORY GOES

In sunlight or in stormy day,
With friendliness or foes,
The country's going just the way—
The way " Old Glory " goes.
To-day—to-morrow—still she waves
Over earth's Freedom or our graves!

She arches earth—a rainbow's ray,
Or, when the storm-wind blows,
A beacon-blaze, she lights the way—
The way that freedom goes.
To-day—to-morrow—still she waves
Over our glory or our graves.

WHEN THE OLD MAN GOT RELIGION

When the ol' man got religion things sorter changed aroun',
The house wuz topsy-turvy, the worl' wuz upside down;
We didn't know what hit us; 'peared like we'd started wrong;
Life had to be made over to his halleluia song!

'Twuz in the winter season? He lit in thisaway:
He pulled the kiver off us long 'fore the break o' day;
"Stir roun'! stir roun'!" he'd holler all up an' down the stairs—
"This life's too short fer sleepin'; rise up fer family prayers!"

We crawled out from that kiver with mournful sighs an' groans,
The teeth of us a-chatterin' like minstrels beatin' bones!
An', ranged aroun' the fireplace—a mighty mournful ring—
He'd holler: "Hymn Two Hundred: Let ever'body sing!"

An' you never heard such singin' sence life an' time
begun;
The angels couldn't stand it, an' stopped their ears
an' run!
Fer the music, comin' zig-zag from them new singin'
ranks,
Wuz worse than storm-winds howlin' roun' Jordan's
stormy banks!

He kept the whole house hustlin': "Work while it's
called To-day!
An' pray whilst you're a-workin'; but work an' work
away!"
But ever' youngster of us—with sad an' sollum face,
Wuz prayin' fer the ol' man to fall away from
grace!

Long years have passed an' left us still with our work
to do;
An' the ol' man, bein' weary, went Home an' left us,
too;
Led by his homely counsel safe to the shelterin'
fold—
Sightin' the fur-off city with shinin' streets of gold.

An' evermore we're praisin' of the Providence on high
That the ol' man got religion in the happy days gone by;
An' we hope to hear him shoutin', when we reach the heavenly stairs,
In the bright, Celestial mornin',—"Rise up to fam'ly prayers!"

HERE'S HOPIN'

Year ain't been the very best;—
Purty hard by trouble pressed;
But the rough way leads to rest,—
  Here's hopin'!

Maybe craps wuz short; the rills
Couldn't turn the silent mills;
But the light's behind the hills,—
  Here's hopin'!

Where we planted roses sweet
Thorns come up an' pricked the feet;
But this old world's hard to beat,—
  Here's hopin'!

P'r'aps the buildin' that we planned
'Gainst the cyclone couldn't stand;
But, thank God we've got the *land*,—
  Here's hopin'!

Maybe flowers we hoped to save
Have been scattered on a grave;
But the heart's still beatin' brave,—
  Here's hopin'!

That we'll see the mornin' light—
That the very darkest night
Can't hide heaven from our sight,—
Here's hopin'!

TWO PICTURES

I

In the dewy morn
I wove the red sash for my lover's sword,
In the sound of the silver bugles
Blowing merrily over the violet vales.
My red lips leaned to the steel,
And kissed it for a holy cause.
And then—the lips of my lover—
And over the orchards
The music of a farewell song.

II

In the mist-wreathed twilight
I wove the white shroud for my lover's sword,
In the sound of the muffled drums
Moaning over the darkened vales.
My white lips leaned to the steel,
And kissed it, and were crimsoned.
And then—the cold lips of my lover,
And over the orchards
The long, desolate Night!

WHEN THE FALL TIME COMES

There's somethin' like a jingle an' a tingle in the air,
Fer the honey's jest a-drippin' from the hives;
The fields are lookin' frosty with the white that blossoms there,
An' the corn crap's jest the biggest of our lives!

Summer's a-goin'—
Needn't beat the drums;
We're bound to have a showin'
When the fall time comes!

There's somethin' like a jingle an' a tingle everywhere,
An' the blue smoke has a meanin' as it curls;
They're tunin' of the fiddle, an' there's music in the air,
An' we'll soon be swinging corners with the girls!

Summer's a-goin'—
Needn't beat the drums;
We're bound to have a showin'
When the fall time comes!

THE MERRY ROUND

Sich a round o' pleasure—goin' left an' right,
Daytime is a picnic—dancin' ever' night!
Never wuz so happy—valley, plain, or hill,
Forty dozen weddin's, and the women willin' still!

Growled about the weather when the summer sun
Wilted all the cornblades—made the toilers run!
But look at what it brought us! harvests broad an' high,
An' halleluias goin' in music to the sky.

Sich a round o' pleasure!—when the fiddles play
Wouldn't swap the winter fer the bloom o' May!
Backlog in the chimney—red sparks on the fly;
Cane-juice never sweeter, an' bright bead on the rye!

Ain't this world a great one? Joy jest layin' round,
Twinklin' in the frost-flakes kiverin' all the ground;
Never wuz so happy—valley, plain, or hill,
Forty dozen weddin's, an the women willin' still!

IN WIND AND RAIN

I

Tired out! . . . and the wind and rain—
Dash of the sleet at the window pane,
  And ever a flurry
    Of snow as white
  As a soul should be
    In God's own sight . . .
And I would that she were here to-night!

II

What harm if she, in the mystery
And moan of the darkness should come to me?
  Should come as the bloom
    From the blast and blight—
  The rose's red,
    And the rose's white,—
Should come as a flower to my breast to-night?

III

Have I only won from Life's storm and stress
Starless Night and Loneliness?

Have I trampled the Wrong
And lifted the Right,
To see the dreams
Of my soul take flight—
To long for a little of Love to-night?

IV

If she should come as the storm breaks wide,
Would the mad world strike her from my side?
Love claims his own
Of right and might,
From the depths of hell
To a heaven's height! . . .
And he only asks for his own to-night!

V

I am weary of dreams . . . to wake and miss
The lips God made for a lover's kiss!
To know that life
Is fast in flight—
That hell is Darkness,
And heaven Light,
And all that I ask is Love to-night!

VI

Tired out! . . . in the Night's despair,
And Love shut out in the Darkness there!
  And hell so deep,
    And heaven so high,
  And the curse of sleep
    Where a dream's a sigh!—
The dream of a Love that will not die!

VII

Tired out! . . . and the wind and rain,
And the wistful eyes at the window-pane.
  Come in, O Love!—
    The hearth's a-light,
  And your soul is white
    As the snow is white!
Come in from the world to your own to-night!

RETURN, SWEET DAY

I

Return, O Day, from out the vanished years
Where now no fires on ruined altars burn;
I give you all Love's tenderness and tears:
Return, sweet Day, return!

II

The same sweet stars are in the heavens of blue,
The same sad lessons Life hath still to learn.
I am aweary for the love of you:
Kind Day, return—return!

III

So brief the time—so rain-dark with Love's tears—
So vainly for one gleam of grace I yearn,
With but one cry in all the dying years,
"Return, sweet Day, return!"

LIFE'S WAYSIDE INN

I

Let us rest us from the strife
At this wayside Inn of Life;
No remembrances of years—
Sorrows, or the fall of tears.
Let us rest us from the throng
Where the Silence is a song.

II

Let us rest: The twilight falls
Soft on echoless, dim halls,
Where life's withering blooms are shed—
Life of quiet comforted.
Stormy was the way, and long,
But God's Silence is a song.

III

What were worldly hopes and fears?
What were kisses—what were tears?
What the heart's cry in the stress
Of its unloved loneliness?
After all the wrath and wrong
Comes God's Silence like a song.

IV

Rest, O Heart! from storm and strife
At this wayside Inn of Life!
We shall fold above the breast
Hands that need God's gift of Rest.
Comes the Night: the Night is long,
But God's Silence is a song!

EVENING SONG

I

The shadows deepen in the western sky,
  The birds take homeward flight;
And one must weep to see the daylight die;
For Love is not; and Memory is a sigh:
  Goodnight! Goodnight!

II

Did any deed unkind, dear, thrill your breast—
  A shadow in the light?
A look—a tone, that brought a dream unblest?
Breathe sweet forgiveness ere sleep whispers, "Rest:"
  Goodnight! Goodnight!

III

One star alone in the still heaven appears—
  A bloom where all seems blight;
I come to you, with trembling hopes and fears—
I hold your hand—I kiss away your tears:
  Goodnight! Goodnight!

ALONG LIFE'S WAY

I

I only ask the strength—the grace
  To take life's crosses as they come;
I may not always see God's face;
  In darkness I am dumb.
Why should I murmur at the way?
Life must have winter, even as May.

II

I count my gain, and not my loss,
  And still my soul is comforted
Though every path leads to a cross
  Whose shadows hide Love's dead.
Out of the blackness of the night
God weaves a laurel for the light.

III

And still far off the light appears,
  And still sweet benedictions fall;
The tears we shed are April tears—
  Sunlight is in them all!
Sorrow endureth—not for long:—
Joy cometh with the morning song!

THE DREAM

So, little heart, Love's summer sweets are dead—
The glory and the gleam.
Face the world bravely; let no tear be shed.
It was a dream—a dream!

Were there not whispers in the song-thrilled air—
A shadow in the beam?
And did you think a flower could live so fair?
Heart, 'twas a dream—a dream!

We are all dreamers from the mother's breast
Through years of peace or pain.
Weep not past dreams; forget them! it is best.
Dear, you shall dream again!

The world is beckoning with its bright lights—see!
Green fields and rippled waves.
The lilies for the living! There will be
Flowers enough for graves.

Lay by each token—touched, perhaps, with tears—
From the new life apart.
The wan and withered violets of sweet years,
That dreamed above your heart.

Playthings of Fate, that Fate would cast aside:
Say in new strength and trust;
"Sweet were the violets—but the violets died;
Dust unto rosy dust!"

Dear little heart! the mourning will be brief;
Lo! a bright dawn appears.
This world of joy is all too sweet for grief—
Too sunny-bright for tears.

Take up the task; there will be strength for all;—
Stars through the storm will stream.
Leave the past tearless where the dead leaves fall:
It was a dream—a dream!

THE VOLUNTEER

The band was playin' "Dixie" when he marched,
marched away;
An' never any likelier lad stepped time to it that day;
"The finest fellow of 'em all!" I heard the town-
folk say.
The band was playin' "Dixie" as he marched—
marched away.

How fast my wild arms held him—my boy, who
would not stay—
The likeliest lad that answered to the captain's call
that day!
"The finest fellow of 'em all!" An' in the red array
Of flags that rippled over them they marched my lad
away!

But a mother's fears, and prayers, and tears are noth-
ing. War must slay,
And the draped, deep drums were muffled as they
brought him home that day:
"The finest fellow of 'em all!" I heard the town-
folk say.
And his mother bendin' over him—dead at her feet
that day!

"HOLD ON AWHILE"

When trouble an' trial wuz round us
The ol' man would say, with a smile,
"Worl' wuzn't made in a minute—
Hold on awhile!"

Nothin' could ever upset him—
Nuthin' his patience could rile:
"Wait jest a minute! Ain't nuthin' much in it—
Hold on awhile!"

An' when at the last he wuz goin',
He said, with a farewell, sweet smile,
"I'll wait fer you, boys, in that heaven o' joys,
But—hold on a while!"

THE FALL OF FROST

The fall o' the frost on the meadows! An' ain't it a
blessin' to you?
How crisp is the air in the woodlands! An' bare-
footed boys in the dew
Are singin' an' springin' an' swingin' their hats where
the summer is lost:
We are just on the threshold of winter—for here is
his herald—the frost!

The fall o' the frost on the meadows! I tell you, the
apples are red,
An' the cane-juice is sweet in the drippin' from the
little mill under the shed!
The fields that were fleecy with cotton are now lookin'
lonesome an' lost;
But the meadows—the meadows are merry, for the
hilltops are white with the frost!

The fall o' the frost on the harvest, an' isn't it spicy
an' sweet?
Tune the old fiddle, an' follow its notes with the fall
o' your feet!
Come in, Miss Mary! Your partner has sorter been
thinkin' you're lost!
An' we'll dance to the merriest music a welcomin'
reel to the frost!

THE STORY OF THE BONNET

I'd made up my mind fer sartin that Jenny (you know that she
Had named the day in her own sweet way—the day she would marry me?)
Should have the purtiest bonnet that ever the store folks made—
One that would throw a rainbow just twenty mile in the shade!

Ever seen Jenny smilin'? Ever took note of her eyes?
I tol' her a angel made 'em from little blue patches o' skies!
Jest 'peared to twinkle sunshine! an' whenever they look at me
I see jest all o' heaven that ever I hope to see!

Well, I went down thar to the city, an' I tol' the store folks plain,
I wanted the finest bonnet that ever come in on the train;
An' I paid my money fer it 'thout any contendin' words:
It wuz all fixed up with roses, an' ribbons, an' singin' birds.

But now the trouble's a-comin'!—she wuz all in deep distress;
How wuz a ten-dollar bonnet to go with a caliker dress?
Mother—she kinder shook her head; said 'twould be "out o' place,"
An' Jenny, with tears a-fallin' on the roses of her face!

But her gran'ma come ter the rescue: "It's been seventy year," says she,
"Sence I wore my weddin' dress, an' now it's good as it use to be:
I've been a-keepin' it stored away—but it saddens me now an' then;
An' seein' tomorrer's the Easter day, we'll make it over fer Jen!"

Jen throwed her arms around her 'till we heard the gran'ma say:
"Ever you see sich a silly gal? She'll smother me thataway!
Go 'long an' git yer scissors, an' all o' yer needles bright;
With a hat like that a weddin' dress is jest what'll set you right!"

An' it did! An' seein' she looked so sweet when the
Easter day come 'roun',
When meetin' wuz over, the license an' the parson
wuz easy foun'!
An' I ain't a-lovin' Jenny any the more, or less,
Kaze I married her Easter mornin' in gran'mother's
weddin' dress!

THE PRAYER FOR RAIN

They've been a-preachin' it, people, that faith is a thing played out,
That the angels never hear us when we sing to the skies, an' shout;
That if the world is beamin', it's Man that makes it bright—
That God's voice ain't in the thunder, an' His smile ain't in the light.

They've been a-preachin' it, people, from the hilltops fur an' nigh;
That the rainbow's only a ribbon roun' the black dress o' the sky;
That there ain't no promise in it, like the Good Book said of old—
"It's only a dream," they tell us, with its purple an' its gold.

They've been a-preachin' it, people, an' I've hearn 'em 'long the way;
But I thank the Lord above us there's faith in the world to-day!

Faith in the true and steadfast—in the hearts that still believe
The great an' glorious promise :—" Ask, and ye shall receive ! "

Listen !—The flowers were wiltin' in the gardens o' the May ;
An' June saw the lilies droopin' in the face o' the rainless day ;
An' we said : " The craps still thirstin' by the valley an' the plain ;
The clouds of God above us, an' never a drap o' rain ! "

An' we sat in the gloom an' grumbled, an' scowled at the skies above,
Till it come to our minds the rain-clouds were ruled by a God of Love ;
An' that comfortin' word o' Scripture—to all o' the hearts that grieve,
Come to us then—sweet-sayin' : " Ask, an' ye shall receive ! "

An' the brotherin called a meetin' in the old church in the pines—
Blest by the summer blossoms, kissed of the climbin' vines ;

An' the preacher rose an' told us: "The Word o' the Lord is plain:
Let us kneel in the Light of His Presence an' pray to the Lord for rain!"

The sky wuz jest like a oven—blazin' all roun' with heat,
But Faith saw the raindrops fallin' in coolin' showers an' sweet;
An', "Lord, send the rain," cried the preacher, "to the hill, an' the field, an' glen!"
An' the very gates of heaven were shook by a loud "Amen!"

An' even as we prayed—no wonder!—bowed in His presence there,
We heard God's voice in the thunder—the God that answers prayer!
We saw the flash o' the lightnin' on the field and the hillside, *plain!*
And we shouted: "Halleluia! Thank God for the rain!—the rain!"

Oh, it fell like a benediction, on the dry an' sunburnt sod;
Till the hills seemed clappin' their hands for joy, an' the glad fields said, "Thank God!"

An' over its gracious fallin' rose the shout o' the people then,
With "Halleluia to heaven!" an' the chorus: "Amen! Amen!"

Brotherin, the Bible's with us!—the promise is true today:
When you're needin' the rain or the sunshine, git down on your knees an' pray!
Thanks be to God for His blessin's, for He's with us now as then:
Jest shout "Halleluia!" to heaven, an' the angels will say "Amen!"

THE LATER REST

I

He toiled, forever faithful, in the ways where Duty led,
When earth seemed like a desert, and dark clouds overhead;
And, "Ain't you feelin' weary!" . . . But still his word would be:
"On the other side of Jordan there'll be rest for me!"

II

The black storms beat above him: He saw, with saddened heart,
The laborers in the vineyard, one after one, depart;
"Oh, rest you from the toiling! There is no light to see!" . . .
"On the other side of Jordan there'll be light for me."

III

"Rest, from the toil and trouble, tired hands and drooping head;
You do but gather roses for graves that hide your dead!"
But evermore that answer, clear-ringing, far and free:
"On the other side of Jordan there'll be rest for me!"

IV

And so he toiled, and toiling, gave earth a lesson sweet
As the Love of God that showered Love's lilies at his feet;
No earthly light could lure him—no dark his faith could dim: —
On the other side of Jordan there was light for him!

AT ROLL CALL

They answer up so smartly to the callin' o' the roll
The night before the battle—
Ere the cannons roar and rattle,—
To the callin'—to the callin' o' the roll.
"All here!"
Faces dear,
To women weeping near—
Whose cheeks have lost the rose-tints, whose lips are white with fear,—
"All here—
All here!"

They answer up so faintly to the callin' o' the roll
After the clashing battle—
When the guns have ceased to rattle,—
To the callin'—to the callin' o' the roll.
"Missing there!"
Faces dear
To the women weeping near—
Heart broken, and with pallid lips too tremulous for prayer,—
"Missing there—
Missing there!"

THE LAST OF THE GRENADIERS

The tears from their eyes were falling—from eyes
that, unafraid,
Had met the swords that glittered at the breasts of the
Old Brigade:—
No wonder they heard the thunder that is echoing
down the years,
And the man that sang of the battle was the last of
the grenadiers!

The last of the men that listened—where blood like a
river ran,
And the guns of a leagued world glistened—to the
call of the Corsican!
That call that is ringing—ringing over the wreck of
years.
(Ah! he was singing—singing—the last of the grena-
diers!)

He sang that day to the Old Brigade: "I was there,
in the crimson fray,
And I saw the Little Corporal in the Emperor's coat
of gray!

The man of the Bridge of Lodi, who rallied and led
the men. . . .
'Twas a deadlier dew at Waterloo, but we fought with
the General then!

"He cried: 'Tis the guns of Grouchy! Courage!
he comes—he comes!'
And the flags of the Old Guard fluttered, and they
rushed to the rolling drums!
They rushed to the ridge, revengeful—on the tigers
crouched for prey—
And they fought as never a man had fought, for the
Emperor's sake that day!

"They fought and died! . . . and side by side
they filled the gulf of death,
Yet still cried: 'Vive l'Empereur!' with even their
dying breath!
They fought and died—with death defied those bayo-
nets dripping red
And gave to France the glory of the brave, heroic
dead!

. . . . . .

"I saw him in the darkness—after the fight was o'er:
I saw him in the darkness, whom I shall see no more!
And the darkness closed around him, but as his form grew dim,
I felt, where I lay bleeding, proud that I bled for him!"

. . . . . .

The tears from their eyes were falling—from eyes that were unafraid;
That had met the swords that glittered at the breasts of the Old Brigade:—
No wonder! They heard the thunder that is echoing down the years,
And the man that sang of the battle was the last of the Grenadiers!

HE DANCES LIFE AWAY

Does he ask how corn is sellin', or if cotton's up or
down?
Is he bothered 'bout the country, or the stocks that
make the town?
Is he worried 'bout the winter, is he sighin' fer the
May?
No! A feller picks the banjer, an' he dances life
away

Does he shrink from all the toilin' in the white blaze
o' the sun,
In the hot sand o' the furrow where the larks before
him run?
No! You never find him tired; when the sun has
left the day
A feller picks the banjer an' he dances life away!

No problem of the races in the hovel or the dome;
He knows his face is blacker than the chimney-back
at home,
But ever more it's smilin', an' he's happy night an'
day,
For a feller picks the banjer, an' he dances life away!

DEAR LITTLE FELLOW

I

Dear little fellow, don't forget—
Leaving you now, that I love you yet!
Just as I did in a far, fair day
When your eyes were light, and your smile was May,
In the beautiful—beautiful far-away!
Dear little fellow, don't forget—
Leaving you now, that I love you yet!

II

Dear little fellow, don't forget—
Leaving you now, that my eyes are wet
With tears for the years that may come to you
When the shadows darken your eyes of blue,
And the dreams are false where the dreams seemed true!
In the desolate darkness don't forget—
Leaving you now, that I love you yet!

III

Dear little fellow! Life is but this:
A glad Good-morning—a Good-night kiss—
A hope, a fear, and a falling tear—

A cross to clasp and a cross to bear,
And laurels and thorns for the brows to wear!
But dear little fellow, don't forget—
Leaving you now, that I love you yet!

IN THE BRANCH

I sit here dreamin', dreamin' of the dear ol' country ranch,
An' a barefoot boy a-wadin' in the cool an' shaded branch;
"Splash, splash!" I hear the water, an' every ripple seems
To make a rill o' music that's runnin' through my dreams!

"Splash, splash!" the water goes;
Downward to the mill it flows;
What cares he for thorn or rose?
Water's cool—that's all he knows!

I sit here dreamin', dreamin' of the sweeter light that shines
On the wild blackberry blossoms an' the honeysuckle vines;
And "Splash!" I hear the water that in the sunshine gleams,
An' a rill o' music runnin' through the shadows o' my dreams!

"Splash, splash!" the water goes;
Downward to the mill it flows;
Cares the boy for thorn or rose?
Water's cool—that's all he knows!

I sit here dreamin', dreamin' till I seem to slip away,
Where the water loved to ripple past meadows sweet with hay;
Where dusky doves are wingin' in mornin's earliest beams
An' the barefoot boy is singin'—is singin' in my dreams!

"Splash, splash!" the water goes;
Downward to the mill it flows;
What cares he for thorn or rose?
Water's cool—that's all he knows!

HIS BEST

I

"Fellers, I have done my best!"
So he said, and went to rest
Like a child that, tired of play,
At the closing of the day,
Lays him on his mother's breast.

II

"Fellers, I have done my best!"
Hands where Death's cold lips were pressed
Folded were, as if in prayer,
In the after-silence there—
Folded gently o'er his breast.

III

All, in those last words expressed!—
All of pain, of grief unguessed!
Who than this can better say
At the closing of life's day—
"Fellers, I have done my best!"

TEN ACRES AND MARY

I'm up an' away
At break o' day,
An' never of work I'm weary;
For I sing this song
As I toil along—
"I've got ten acres an' Mary!"

Troubles enough—
For the worl' is rough,
An' things will go contrary;
But ever this song
As I trudge along—
"I've got ten acres an' Mary!"

No angel bright,
With wings of light;
Of a angel I'd grow weary;
But a woman true,
That's a joy to you—
"I've got ten acres an' Mary!"

IN HALLELUIA TOWN

The namin' o' the settlement wuz hard to bring about;
Each feller made suggestions, an' still we wuz in doubt;
So, we helt a big town meetin', an'—'peared like providence—
We named her "Halleluia," an' we've all been happy sence!

They ain't no growlers in it—on ever plain an' slope
The sun is shinin' brightly—the stars air whisperin' hope;
An' all the folks 'll tell you, for miles an' miles aroun',
There ain't no thorns along the road to Halleluia Town!

'Twuz inspiration in it—that Halleluia name!
It brung about good feelin', it sot our souls aflame!
An' what to us air mansions in cities of renown,
So long as we air happy in Halleluia Town!

For there the birds air singin', the fields air flowerin' fine;
The sun jest don't know nothin' but how to rise an' shine!
An' what a blessed world 'twould be—without a care or frown,
If folks would only emigrate to Halleluia Town!

A SONG IN APRIL

I

Here's to fickle love or true—
  Hands that clasp to sever:
Mistress Nell, a health to you—
  Joy be yours forever!
April winds are out to-day,
Blowing blossoms sweet your way.

II

Here's to fickle love or true,
  And a glad thanksgiving
For that sky's unshadowed blue
  And the joy of living!
For that kinder love and sweet
In the violets at your feet.

III

Love will come, and love will go
  Like the light on clover:
It is but a dream, you know:—
  Dreams so soon are over!
But for roses or for rue.
Mistress Nell, a health to you!

IN FIELDS OF BLOOM

I reckon I'm kin to the lilies: I toil not, an' never spin;
I only answer to roll-call when the winds from the west blow in
Over the dew-drenched medders—over the song-sweet rills,
An' the sun with a glad "Good-mornin'" reads the dreams o' the drowsy hills.

What do I want to toil fer, when the golden bee contrives
To feed a feller on honey stored in the drippin' hives;
When I see the color creepin' to the peach's rosy roun'
An' the red-ripe apples are fallin' an' dentin' the wet, sweet groun'?

Never was made fer a worker; how kin I stack the hay
Or follow the furrow when all the birds are singin' my soul away?
Singin' my soul away to the medder-grasses sweet;
With the green o' the boughs above me an' the violets at my feet?

Reckon I'm kin to the lilies—that's what the workers say;
Brother-in-law to the medder dressed fer the marriage with May;
But I allus answer to roll-call—though I toil not, an' never spin;
The roll-call o' the roses when the winds from the west blow in!

THE MORNING

I

The good time that's coming is not far away;
The weariest Winter is dreaming of May;
Out o' the darkness the light o' day—
The morning! the morning! the morning!

II

What of the sorrows of all the dark years—
What of the lost hopes, and what of the fears?
After the grief and the rain o' the tears—
The morning! the morning! the morning!

III

Fast part the storm-clouds, unveiling the bright;
The ships hear the home-bells—the harbor's in sight;
And we dream, and we drift evermore to the light—
The morning! the morning! the morning!

WHEN JENNY CAME ALONG

Fishin' in the river, an' Jenny come along,
Apern full o' flowers, an' singin' of a song;
"Shame to ketch them fishes—cruel 'tis an' wrong!"
That wuz what she tol' me—when Jenny come along.

Fishin' pole wuz noddin'—fish a-pullin' strong;
Never had sich luck as that, when Jenny come along;
Knowed she wuz a-comin', by the blossoms roun' the place;
Water, like a lookin' glass, showin' of her face.

Wound up that 'ere tackle—let the fishin' go:
Walked with her through meadows, with daisies white as snow;
Wind a-blowin' in my face the bright locks round her brow:—
Never did like fishin' in a river, anyhow!

IN CAMPMEETIN' TIME

Gittin' to'rds campmeetin'-time—fixin' up the tent,
An' groomin' all the oxen in the Billville settlement;
We that ain't up on singin' air a-projickin' about,
An' some air tryin' of their lungs to shout the loudest shout!

Some don't believe in shoutin', but to me it's cl'ar as day
Ef a feller has religion it'll sometimes act that way!
It ain't no sign the angels air deef up thar on high,
But we jest can't help a-sendin' in a halleluia cry!

Some preachers preach about it from mornin' till the night,
An' say the shoutin' fellers ain't got religion right!
They rule it out o' meetin'; but I feel it more an' more,
A shipwrecked feller's 'bleeged to shout the time he sights the shore!

Fer he's been lost an' lonesome on the ocean's roarin' tide,
An' when he sees the lights shine on the welcome other side,

It ain't a bit o' wonder, in the night o' storm an' foam,
He shouts that shout o' welcome—fer he hears the bells o' home!

But—talkin' 'bout campmeetin'—we're fixin' fer it fine;
An' ef it comes to shoutin', we'll ax the worl' to jine!
We'll let each brother have his way—each one that's feelin' blest—
An' tell us, any fashion, how he likes religion best!

THE SHIP'S COMING HOME

Ever the light in the window—the light that flared
over the foam;
And ever the faith of a woman: "The ship's coming home—coming home!"

Ever the rose in the garden, when the wild larks
were winging the loam;
And ever the faith of a woman: "The ship's coming home—coming home!"

In dreams, the brave call of the captains, from over
the storm and the foam:
"Keep bright the love-light in the harbor! The ship's coming home—coming home!"

Ever the beat of the billows—the stars in the blue of
the dome;
And the wind that is waving the willows: "The ship's coming home—coming home!"

And the weird, far call of the captains, and the toss of
the turbulent foam;
And the voice of the faith of a woman: "The ship's coming home—coming home!"

"TOLLABLE WELL!"

Spite o' the tempests a-blowin',
  Still had one story to tell:
Bright, sunny weather, or snowin',
  Allus felt "tollable well."

Half o' the settlement sighin'—
  Things gone to ruin, pell-mell!
Never did hear him a-cryin'—
  Allus felt "tollable well!"

'Course he had trouble an' sorrow
  (Come to us all fer a spell),
But, seein' a brighter to-morrow,
  He allus felt "tollable well."

A POOR, PLAIN COLONEL

I'd like to j'ine the army, an' go 'long with the recruits:
I'd be shore to show off handsome in them regimental boots;
I'd beat 'em all a-shinin'—I'd throw 'em in the shade;
But I'm jest a poor, plain colonel, an' I ain't got no brigade!

I'd like to j'ine the army: I'd be shore to cut a dash,
With spurs to make the mare go, an' a shiny sword an' sash;
I'd make the finest record that a feller ever made;
But I'm jest a poor, plain colonel, an' I ain't got no brigade!

Oh, I'd like to j'ine the army: I'd be shore to make my way,
An' beat the best o' brigadiers a-drawin' of their pay!
But I'm loafin' roun' the homestead—eatin' melons in the shade;
Fer I'm jest a poor, plain colonel, and I ain't got no brigade!

BEFORE A FINE OAK FIRE

Who's talkin' 'bout the summer time
When all the skies perspire?
Jest give me winter, brotherin',
An' a fine oak fire!

The sleety rain a-comin' down—
The wind a-howlin' higher
Than all the steeples in the town,
An' me—before a fire,

With "cider" settin' on the shelf—
The brand I most desire;
The blaze a-talkin' to itself—
The language o' the fire.

That's when the coldest winter night
A reg'lar picnic seems,
The sparks a-flyin' left an' right,
An' me a-dreamin' dreams!

That's when I'm comfortabler than
I am on summer days
When buds an blossoms bresh yer han'
An vi'lets crowd the ways.

An' when a feller's dreamin' so
His ol' sweethearts come nigher,
Love takes a seat an' warms his feet
Before a fine oak fire!

AN ANSWERED PRAYER

Our John's been made a doctor—so all the papers tell,
An' he's lookin' 'roun' fer business, but the folks are keepin' well;
But his mother, she is hopeful, for he's got to pay his bills,
An' she's asked the Lord fer measels an' a sprinklin' of the chills!

It's been a month, I reckon, sence they took an' turned him out,
But the country is so healthy that the doctors are in doubt;
But his mother keeps on prayin', while he's dodgin' of his bills:
An' she's asked the Lord fer measels an' a sprinklin' of the chills!

These women has a lot o' faith—they never loose their hold.
(I wonder what's the matter now? I'm gittin' kinder cold!
The good Lord's gone an' answered her, an' John 'll pay his bills;
Fer if this here ain't the measels, it's a-sprinklin' of the chills!)

BLOOMS

Fairy fingers o' the Frost,
Whatsoever may be lost,
Spare the blossoms of that tree
Whose red blooms are life to me,—
Even the blooms of Memory!

In Life's garden it stands—There,
Braving storm and wintry air;
When Life's scattered blooms I see
Trampled where the black storms be,
Faithful still to Memory.

Fairy fingers o' the Frost,
Let not these dear blooms be lost!
Pass them by all pityingly,—
Let the May their mother be
In a land of Memory!

AT THE OPERA

I've been an' heerd the opery—an' I reckon it wuz grand;
But the music I've been raised to is "Dixie" by the band;
"Way Down in Alabama," an' "Darlin' Nelly Gray,"
An' that hifalutin' singing made a feller lose his way!

An' then, the words wuz furrin', an' I r'aly never knowed
How to track 'em an' to keep 'em in the middle o' the road;
Fer what I wuz a-wantin'—but I hoped fer it in vain—
Wuz a lively double-shuffle, an' "Han's Roun', Liza-Jane!"

But the folks applauded lively, till all the house wuz stirred,
Though them that cheered the loudest couldn't understand a word!
An' I hired of a feller fer a quarter of a dollar,
To nudge me at the proper time, an' tell me when to holler.

I stood it out, right noble, an' when the thing wuz through,
Sez I: "I reckon that you done the best you all could do;
But you didn't hit me heavy!" an' I struck on comin' down,
A feller whistlin' "Dixie," an' follered him roun' town!

OUR COUNTRY'S CALL

With trump to trump replying
  Still bright her sabres shine,
With all her old flags flying
  And all her men in line.

She calls them from the highlands
  Where tower her green hills free;
The far Atlantic islands
  Still answer from the sea!

They come as in the darkened
  And deadly days of yore,
When to the cry they hearkened
  And braved the battle's roar!

Her cause is never dying—
  Still bright her sabres shine,
With all her old flags flying,
  And all her men in line!

AS THE BOYS GO MARCHING BY

Doesn't it thrill a fellow—make a glitter in his eye
And a fidget in his footsteps—when the boys go marching by?
Old mem'ries throng around him—with no regret or sigh.
He hails the shining columns as the boys go marching by!

He seems to hear the rattle of the rifles once again,
As in the days God's daisies were reddened by the rain.
The clamor of the captains—the charge and the retreat,
And thinks of Love that listens for unreturning feet.

Doesn't it thrill a fellow? Wrinkled and gray he stands;
But oh! the gleam o' bayonets, and the banners and the bands!
The white hair falling over the brows of the old-time braves,
As they answer to the roll-call over their comrades' graves.

Love of a common country: Peace on the plain and hill:
And peace where the boys are marching to the far tents, white and still.
North and South in the union, and never a tear or sigh;
But doesn't it thrill a fellow when the boys go marching by!

THE MIRACLE DAYS

Good folks, the days o' miracles ain't past an' gone away :
The weather man predicted snow, an' here's the snow to-day !
They know the path the sun an' moon air travellin'—so they do—
They've tracked the stars of heaven an' caught the comets, too !

They know jest how the ol' world rolls—they've got it down by heart ;
They know the cyclone's comin' 'fore it ever makes a start !
They know the awful distance from here up to the sun ;
They've counted all the worlds above, an' named 'em—every one !

Ain't nuthin hidden from 'em—they know the all-in-all !
When obstacles air risin' they batter down the wall
An' stand in all the glory an' beauty o' the light,
A-givin' out this verdict—that there shall be no night !

An' I r'a'ly wouldn't wonder, at the pace we're bein' led,
Ef they shook the world like thunder by the raisin' o' the dead!
Fer, step by step they're goin' upon the upward way,
Till a feller's glad he's livin' in a world like this to-day!

A PRETTY GOOD WORLD

Pretty good world if you take it all round—
  Pretty good world, good people!
Better be on than under the ground—
  Pretty good world, good people!
Better be here where the skies are as blue
As the eyes of your sweetheart a-smilin' at you—
Better than lyin' 'neath daisies and dew—
  Pretty good world, good people!

Pretty good world with its hopes and its fears—
  Pretty good world, good people!
Sun twinkles bright through the rain of its tears—
  Pretty good world, good people!
Better be here, in the pathway you know—
Where the thorn's in the garden where sweet roses
    grow,
Than to rest where you feel not the fall o' the snow—
  Pretty good world, good people!

Pretty good world! Let us sing it that way—
  Pretty good world, good people!
Make up your mind that you're in it to stay—
  At least for a season, good people!

Pretty good world, with its dark and its bright—
Pretty good world, with its love and its light;
Sing it that way till you whisper, "Good-night!"—
Pretty good world, good people!

SINGING HIM TO SLEEP

The river's singin' to the sea—the river cool an' deep,—
An' the reason that I know it is it's singin' me to sleep!
Past all the plains an' medders—past fiel's whar folks 'll reap,
It's singin' me to sleep, folks—it's singin' me to sleep!

Singin' me to sleep
Whar they sow an' reap—
In the shadders
O' the medders
It's singin' me to sleep!

It's jest a-lazyin' along;—no track o' time I keep;
I only know the river's song is singin' me to sleep.
The busy worl' is workin'—the busy worl' must weep,
But the river as it ripples on is singin' me to sleep!

Singin' me to sleep
Whar they sow an' reap—
In the shadders
O' the medders
It's singin' me to sleep!

I ain't got no ambition ;—the hills air mighty steep !
I'm happier whar the river is singin' me to sleep.
Never did like workin'—too hot to sow or reap ;
I only wish the river could sing the worl' to sleep !

Singin' me to sleep :—
Folks that work must weep ;
But in shadders
O' the medders
It's singin' me to sleep !

THE BLESSED RAIN

Dear heart, dost thou complain
When the kind God sends rain?
  Think of the thirsting crops
  That drink the beady drops—
Think of the flowers, unfolding all their sweets—
The city's burning streets,
The famished flocks upon the mountain tops—
The windless casements where the sick in vain
  Cry for the cool, sweet rain!
Think—and thank God
For every drop that quivers on a clod!

OUT IN THE WEATHER

Out in the weather, with the blooms and with the birds!
Set the sweetest music to the sweetest human words!
Ring, bells, ring!
And blossoms sway and swing!
For all the world is love, my dear, when all the world is spring.

Out in the weather, with the blossoms and the breeze,
The sunshine's gold and silver on the tresses o' the trees!
Ring, bells, ring!
While birds in music sing!
All the world is love, my dear, when all the world is spring!

Out in the weather—the weather fair and free!
And a river, and a meadow, and a mocking-bird for me!
Ring, bells, ring,
Where pink the blossoms swing!
For all the world is love, my dear, when all the world is spring.

AN INDIAN-SUMMER DAY

Afar in tangles mazy
  Are gold and scarlet gleams;
But golden-rod and daisy
  Tell not the winds their dreams,
But even the winds seem dead, for they
Ruffle no rose-leaf on their way.

And yonder where the hill is
  No blade—no bloom is stirred;
Still are the water-lilies:
  There is no whispered word
To wake the world, that wakes to weep:
Let it sleep—let it sleep!

A ROCKABY SONG

He all time winkin' at me wid his li'l shiny eye—
He de worrienst er chillum fer ter make 'im rockaby!
I wonders why dey let 'im lef' de playgroun' in de sky!
He won't go ter sleepy twell de mawnin'!

I tells 'im 'bout de creeturs dat 'll come en' ketch 'im sho'
Ef his li'l eyes stay open—better shet de sleepy do'!
But bless his honey-sweetness! w'y, he only wink de mo'!—
He won't go ter sleepy twell de mawnin'!

But ain't his face a pictur? Sweetest one I ever see!
En' dem eyes er his is bluer dan de sky kin hope ter be;
En' I sorter feels dat heaven's keepin' company wid me
Whar he won't go ter sleepy twell de mawnin'!

GOODBY, MISTER RAIN

Sunshine jest a-comin' down
'Crost de hill en plain!
Now Miss Nancy drive ter town—
Goodby, Mister Rain!
She gwine buy dat Easter hat;
(Won't she look too sweet in dat?)
Make dem beaux say: "Whar she at?"
Goodby, Mister Rain!

Lizard lookin' mighty spry,
Run lak railroad train!
Spread he blanket out ter dry—
Goodby, Mister Rain!
Rabbit rise up in de grass—
See Miss Nancy gwine pass;
Bluebird sing: "She come at las'!"
Goodby Mister Rain!

Wes' Win' say: "I'll run a race
Down dat hill en plain;
Gwine ter kiss Miss Nancy face!"
Goodby, Mister Rain!
Red Rose say: "I up ter dat!
She gwine wear me on her hat,—
Make dem beaux say 'Whar she at?'"
Goodby, Mister Rain!

HOE YOUR ROW

De fiel's 'll soon be hummin'
  Roun' de country high en low;
De harves' is a-comin':
  Hoe yo' row!
  Hoe yo' row!

No time now fer de sleeper;
  It's "Git up now, en go!"
It's de sower makes de reaper;
  Hoe yo' row!
  Hoe yo' row!

It's sweet de birds is singin'
  De songs you lovin' so;
But de harves' bells is ringin';
  Hoe yo' row!
  Hoe yo' row!

HIS TIME FOR SINGING

Chicken-hawk a-sailin' high,
  Hoppergrass a-springin';
Come 'long, Mister Mockin'-bird,
  Hit's yo' time fer singin'!

Brown straw in de bluebird bill,
  Cattle-bells a-ringin';
Wake up, Mister Mockin'-bird,
  Hit's yo' time fer singin'!

Swallow in de ol'-time gourd
  Havin' fun a-swingin';
Rouse up, Mister Mockin'-bird,
  Hit's yo' time fer singin'!

THE COLORED DANCING MATCH

1

'Twuz in de dancin' season w'en de fros' wuz layin' roun'
En de rabbit wuz a-gwine lak a gray ghos' 'cross de groun'—
W'en de lazies'er niggers wuz a-comin' ter de scratch—
Dat we took de whole plantation wid de cullud Dancin' Match.

2

De prize wuz—lemme see now; Two hams, a sid er meat,
Sack er flour, en a jimmyjohn what had a mouth ez sweet
Ez a hive a-drippin' honey—ez a red rose, w'en de dew
Sorter tilts it, 'twell it's leanin' ter de bees what drinks ter you.

3

De flo' wuz smooth en sanded, de fiddler in his place—
De lively music ripplin' 'cross de wrinkles in his face
En lightin' up de eyes er him, en tinglin' ter his feet:
"Good Times in Ole Verginny," en "Kentucky's Hard ter Beat!"

4

De schedule fer de dancin' wuz " All git in de ring !"
En " Who'll hol' out de longes' whilst dey got a foot ter fling !"
Dey wuz twenty answer roll-call, lak a sojerin' brigade,
En dey never wuz sich dancin' sence a fiddle-string wuz made !

5

En couple after couple—fagged out en short er breath—
Went reelin' f'um dat dancin' 'fo' dey dance deyse'f ter death !
All of 'em 'cept Br'er Williams : he wuz in de ring fer sho',
En his foots des kep' a-kickin' er de white san' f'um de flo' !

6

De fiddlestick a-flyin', de lights a-gittin' low,
De music in a gallop, en Br'er Williams on de go !
" You wins de prize, Br'er Williams !"—But still de fiddler played,
En lightnin' wuzn' nuthin' ter de steps Br'er Williams made !

7

He dance so fas', I tell you he paralyze dem folks;
Lak a wagon-wheel a-gwine 'twell you des can't see de spokes!
Wid shuffle, shuffle, shuffle, en many a turn en twist,
His form a-gittin' misty, en de fiddler in de mist!

8

De lights gone out; de owl hoot; de dogs begin ter bark,
En Br'er Williams lookin' ghos'-like wid dat dancin' in de dark!
Out de winders jumped de people; de mules commence ter prance,
En 'twuz, "Good Lawd, he'p Br'er Williams, fer de devil's in de dance!"

9

Dey galloped 'cross de country—de wagon's rattlin' 'long;
But *still* heerd dat fiddle gwine in a mos' *ondyin'* song!
En lookin' back, dey sighted in de skeery-lookin' light
Br'er Williams still a-dancin' lak a shadder in de night.

10

En in de dancin' season, f'um de valley en de hill
Dey kin see Br'er Williams dancin'—heah de fiddle playin' still,
En heah de night owls hootin', see de ole ha'nts stan'in' round',
Whilst Br'er Williams' ghos' is movin' ter de fiddle's squeaky soun'.

11

En dar he'll dance ferever, w'en de fros' is fallin' gray;
En dat terrifyin' fiddler makes de same ol' fiddle play;
You kin heah de flo' a-creakin', en de win' all mo'nful sighs;
En we don't want no mo' dancin' whar de devil wins de prize!

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"DES A LI'L' CABIN"

Des a li'l' cabin, en a white road leadin' ter it;
I follers up de furrer, en I hoe de cotton fer it;
Chillun on de flo',
En a woman in de do',
Singin' en singin' in de mawnin'.

Des a li'l' cabin in de shadder er de pines,
Frame wid honeysuckles en de mornin' glory vines;
Li'l' spot o' groun'
Wid de chillun playin' roun',
Singin' en singin' in de mawnin'.

Des a li'l' cabin whar de firelight I see,
Twinklin' er a welcome 'cross de cotton fields ter me.
Sayin': "Whar you roam
Heah's yo' home, yo home, yo' home!"
Singin' en singin' in de mawnin'.

Des a li'l' cabin; yit it frequent 'pears so high,
Dey kin hear what we a-sayin' in de mansions in de sky!
Dis word de sweet word said—
"Give us our daily bread!"
Singin' en singin' in de mawnin'.

"Des a Li'l' Cabin"

Des a li'l' cabin whar de blue smoke rise en curl,
Kin hol' enough er happiness ter reach eroun' de worl'!
Dey tells me dat I po'—
But de woman's in de do'
Singin' en singin' in de mawnin'.

A SPRINGTIME PHILOSOPHER

I kin tell w'en Springtime comin' by de mos' *onfail-in'* signs;
Tain't de risin' sap what tingle ter de tip-top er de pines,
Or de fros' what lef' de furrer, or de larks a-flyin' low
Or de whistle er de pa'tridge kaze he love his sweet-heart so!

But I sorter hez a feelin' what I dunno how ter call,
Dat ef I wuz a blossom I'd hang low, en *never* fall!
Dat ef Gabrul blowed his trumpet fer de sleepin' folks ter rise
I'd des feel too contented fer ter wake en rub my eyes!

Hit's somepin' in de *elements*—de blowin' er de breeze,
De *listenin'* er de lily fer de comin' er de bees;
De lazy river gwine 'long a-feelin' er his way
Ter de medders, en sweet places whar de honey-suckles stay.

De sun, he say "Good-mawnin'!" whar de fiel's is
drench wid dew,
En I des ain't enterprisin' 'nuff ter tell 'm, "Same ter
you!"
De trees, dey tells me "Howdy! We a-dressin' fer
de show,
En soon we'll meet de mockin' birds en swing 'em
high en low!"

But I never makes no answer! I des lays back so
still
En lazy in de sunshine—lak I los' my way en will!
Wid eyes shet tight, en dreamin' in my app'inted
place,
I wouldn't bresh a bluefly f'um de furrers in my
face!

Oh, I knows w'en Spring's a comin', en I done laid
down my rule,
Dat I wuzn't bo'n fer plowin' en gee-hawin' er de
mule,
But fer listenin' ter de cattle bells 'cross daisies cool
en deep,
Wid de feelin' what de trees hez w'en dey rocks de
birds ter sleep!

TWO VIEWS OF IT

W'en de blizzard blow my neighbor house
Clean off de whole plantation,
En he weep en cry,
En moan en sigh,
En he fin' hisse'f lef' high en dry
Dat's done fer his soul's salvation!

W'en de blizzard blow my house away,
En I howls lak all creation,
Hit's plain ez day
En a furrer in May,
(I des don't keer what my neighbor say.)
Dat's a mighty strange dispensation!

THE WAY TO THE MELON PATCH

Don't want no moon, en not one match
Fer ter light my way ter de melon patch;
Night or day
(Dat what I say!)
I kin shet my eye en fin' my way!

De road ez white ez a streak er light;
But I takes de path whar de san' ain't bright;
Kaze de white man wait
By de shotgun gate,
Fer ter blow me clean 'cross Georgy state!

So, take yo' moon, en keep yo' match;
I knows my way ter de melon patch!
Night or day,
Whilst you watch en pray,
I shets my eye en I fin's my way!

SWING DEM SISTERS

Th'ow some white san' on dat flo'—
Put some rozzum on dat bow;
Dis heah's Chris'mus time fer sho'—
  Swing dem sisters!

Do dat ol' time fiddle proud!
Call de figgers—call 'em loud!
Who dance bes' in all de crowd?
  Swing dem sisters!

Han's all roun', en' "Short'in Bread;"
Fling yo' boots an' ben' yo' head;
Dance ontell you shake de shed—
  Swing dem sisters!

Winders rattlin', en de wall
Shakin' lak' he gwine ter fall!
Come in one, en come in all—
  Swing dem sisters!

FOR CHRISTMAS GRACE

I ax de Lawd fer Chris'mus grace—
  Ter sen' dese chillun some;
But dar's no chimbly ter de place,
  How Santy Claus gwine come?
I wonders whar we all so po',
  Ef he'll come knockin' at de do'?

In dey sweet sleep de chillum stir—
  Dey heahs de bells in town;
I wish we had a chimbly fer
  De ol' man ter come down!
You reckon, whar we's all so po',
  Dat he'll come knockin' at de do'?

A FIELD SONG

I up fo' day
En on my way
(" Plow dat furrer ter de en' ! ")
All day long
De same ol' song—
" Plow dat furrer ter de en' ! "

O believers—
You dat sow en reap,
De sun shine hot
In ever' spot
But you ain't got time ter sleep !

De jaybird, say
" Hit's a holiday—
Plow dat furrer ter de en' ! "
De fiel'-lark 'low,
" Dey got you now !—
Plow dat furrer ter de en' ! "

O believers—
You dat sow en reap,
De sun shine hot
In ever' spot,
But you ain't got time ter sleep !

But I plows—I does—
Whar de melon wuz,
De bes' dat de good Lawd sen';
En fum north ter souf
I smacks my mouf
Ez I plows dat furrer ter de en'!

O believers—
You dat sow en reap
You'll sho' feel prime
In de melon time,
But you won't have time ter sleep!

A SONG OF TO-MORROW

Lil' bit er trouble,
Honey, fer terday;
Yander come Termorrer—
Shine it all away!

Rainy Sky is sayin',
"Dis'll never do!
Fetch dem rainbow ribbons,
En I'll dress in blue!"

MARCH AND APRIL

Mister March gone howlin'—
  Des lak he drunk wid dram :
He fling his fros' at Aperl
  En hit de steeples—ba-am !
But Aperl, in his rosy yard,
He say, " Go 'long, you ole blowhard ! "

De Vi'lets hunt fer kiver.
  De peach blooms lef' de place,
De half-dress' Lily shiver,
  De Rose red in de face !
But Aperl say : " My task is plain :
I'll beat you back wid silver rain ! "

En den he git a armful
  Er all his lilies white,
En take his rain en roses
  En pelt 'im out er sight !
But March, he say dat he don't keer,—
" I bet you I'll be back nex' year ! "

HIS SONG OF MONEY

I tellen' you, my honey,
Dat you better make de money
Whilst de light is still a-shinin' in de skies;
Whilst de weather lookin' sunny
Ain't de bees a-makin' honey?
Hit's de money, Oh, my honey, wins de prize!

I tellin' you, my honey,
You kin buil' a worl' wid money,
En brighten up its winter en its spring;
De bigges' gate is swingin'
W'en de dollar come a-ringin'—
Dey allus know de dollar by its ring!

But, atter all, my honey,
W'en you gives yo' life fer money,
En de shadders 'gin ter gether roun' you fas',
W'en trouble come a-sighin',
En de heart er you is cryin',
Hit's Love dat bring de comfort ter you las'!

THE WAY LOVE LEADS

I

Thorns or flowers in life may be,
But the way Love leads is the way for me.

II

Never a question, never a fear
Under God's heaven, if Love be near.

III

Bitter the burdens of life, but still
I bear them meekly at Love's sweet will.

IV

Knowing that Love of life is Lord,
Not a rewarder, but a Reward!

DEAR, TOILING HANDS

I

Made for a throne, to give a queen's commands,
That glad hearts might obey,
These beautiful and love-kissed, tender hands
Yet toil along life's way.

II

Frail as a lily, bowed upon its stem,
With the spring rains impearled,
Surely the kind God did not fashion them
To battle with a world!

III

Made for the sweetest kiss that love bestows—
Not for a cruel strife;
In life's sweet gardens they should reap the rose—
Not the red thorns of life!

IV

Dear hands of Duty, in a life of loss
Fighting against despair
Where a cold world would nail them to a cross
And leave them bleeding there.

V

They shiver in the wintry cold; they know
Never the kiss of Rest.
Would that the world its pity would bestow
And warm them at Love's breast!

VI

Dear hands! that make each sacrifice complete
Of Love that dares so much!
Some child's brow, bending for a blessing sweet,
Is aching for your touch!

VII

Some home, in whose dim halls no lovelight shines,
Would at your will grow bright;
Yearning for you to trim the blossoming vines
Loveward, toward the light!

VIII

Yet, toiling ever, in bleak, barren ways—
Bound as with iron bands,
Take from a singer this poor meed of praise,
Dear, faithful, serving hands!

IX

Holy with service! On this flowerless sod
Not vainly you have striven:
Toiling for Love, dear hands! you toil for God
And so, take hold on heaven!

THE VICTORY OF PEACE

Spring, with her banners gold and green,
With her splendid suns and her stars serene,
  Smiles in the peace that comes after the fray;
And under the arch of the April skies
The starry flag of the Union flies
  Comrades! over your breasts to-day.
Forward! March! to the roll of the drum
The loyal sons of the Southland come!

Not to the battle!—the cannon's roar
Is heard in the forests and fields no more;
  The sweetest roses in all the South,
Blossoming up from the stainless sod,
With incense sweet as they smile to God,
  Have sealed with silence its iron mouth.
Your guns are stacked and your swords are sheathed,
And your brows with the laurels of Peace are wreathed.

It is after the battle; what sounds are here?
The songs of birds on the scented air;

The murmurous sigh of the inland gales;
The voice of the rivers that dashing free,
Move in melody out to sea
By murmurous meadows and violet vales;
Where once, in the strife and the passion and pain,
Rose the shout of the victor, the cry of the slain.

It is after the battle; the fight is done;
The victory lost and the victory won!
And ye, who fared to the fight and shed
Your blood on the battle fields, come to-day—
Thinned brigades from the far-away,
To the silent hillocks that hide your dead!
Halt! there are heroes that slumber here,
And ye are such for the wounds ye bear!

Beat, ye drums, with no muffled sound!
Let the bugles echo the camps around!
And still three cheers for the boys in gray!
For whether they lived, or whether they died,
The South by their valor is glorified
And rich in her record of love to-day!
Sons of the South! there's a victory sweet
That comes to the brave in the ranks of defeat!

Here are they lying, the ones that shed
Their blood for the South till her vales ran red,
And her rivers blushed with the crimson tide!
Honor them! Over their graves the years
Have scattered their roses and showered their tears
And Southern women have knelt and sighed.
Honor them! Honor was theirs, and fame
Enshrines in glory each deathless name.

The flag that they bore to the fight is furled,
Hidden away from the new-made world,
And trailed in the dust are its crimson bars;
The beautiful flag! and they loved it so,
But that is now in the long-ago,
When the heavens were beaming with hopeful stars;
Yet rare is the garland that o'er them waves—
Whose crimson shadow falls on their graves.

And Peace, like a beautiful angel, broods
O'er the fertile fields and the solitudes
Of a land made bright by the smile of God;
And—dearest blessing of all—to-day,
The foes who fought in the far-away,
Are re-united on this dear sod,

Which blossoms over the slain of war—
Friends! was it love we were fighting for?

Oh, love is ours. Though the fight was sore,
It is ended now—we are friends once more!
Once more—thank God!—we can proudly stand,
And looking back on the bloody past,
Say: "It is over at last—at last!"
With heart to heart and with hand to hand,
Over—and here, in the sight of heaven,
We do forgive, as we are forgiven.

And thus forgiven, brave hearts and true,
The boys in gray and the boys in blue—
Your higher mission at last is done,
And though o'er the graves of our dead we weep,
We can trust them all to the tender keep
Of the God who guides us and makes us one!
One in the union which shall not cease
Till the flags are furled in the Port of Peace.

JEAN

Jean—my Jean—with the eyes of light
An' the beautiful, soft brown hair,
D'ye know that I'm longin' for you to-night—
For your lips,—for the clasp of your hand so white,
An' the thrill o' your voice so dear?

Jean—my Jean—of the glances bright,
Where the smile shines through the tear,
D'ye know that I'm call'n' to you to-night
Where the seagulls cry like ghosts in flight,
An' the dark falls lone an' drear?

Jean—my Jean—where the snow drifts white
Through the answerless, cry air,—
Ah, would to God you were here to-night,
Braiding your beautiful tresses of light,
An' that I were lying there

THE RIDE WITH MOLLY

The bees were in the blossoms and the woods were white as snow,
With miles and miles o' daisies in a springtime long ago;
And the winds from dreaming meadows came with kisses sweet and kind
When I drove the cows from pasture and Molly rode behind.

I remember all about it—the pathway through the dells,
Where the old mare timed her footsteps to the music of the bells
That clanked the whole way homewards to the merry milking place,
But mostly I remember Molly's curls about my face!

For riding there behind me, every breeze a-blowing free
Would catch 'em and would kiss 'em and toss 'em over me!

And sometimes, too, I turned my head to see her
bright eyes shine,
And our faces came together and her lips were close
to mine!

I didn't mind the labor in the fields or in the glades—
The long and weary furrows where the young corn
waved its blades,
For I knew that ere the twilight came a sweet reward
I'd find—
I'd drive the cows from pasture and Molly'd ride be-
hind!

And once the folks got anxious, and said: "The cows
are late,"
And they looked and looked for Molly and the old
mare at the gate;
And the reason was I'd "said the word," and kinder
spoke my mind:
The old mare ran away with me and Molly rode be-
hind!

THE WOMAN'S SONG

They'll never have done with the fightin' on land an' over sea ;
Government—Government, what does it care—what does it care for me ?
Bugles must blow an' flags must wave, an' the muffled drums must beat,
An' what to a lass is a lover when they lay him dead at her feet ?
They'll never have done with the fightin'. Forward the columns sweep ;
I hear the shout o' the captains as I tend the hearth an' weep.
Far off an' faint—but I hear it; an' a white, dead face I see
Under the sod in the grave that God an' government make for me !
His hair was like the raven's wing. (I joy that my lips have prest,
As it fell in its flowing beauty, this dark lock on my breast !)

An' his brave, bright eyes looked love to mine—the eyes I shall never see
'Till God at the great white Judgment Day shall give him back to me.
Bible they've got for battles: For men have fought an' died
Ere the Prince of Peace said strife should cease—the Prince that they crucified;
Though a woman's tears bedew the years, shall they stay the crimson tide?
What can you do with government, with Bible on its side?
Men must fight the battles; lover an' lass must part;
But what is a star of glory to a woman's broken heart?
Government's right, they tell me, an' the wrong must righted be:
Give the lass then to her lover—an' my dead love back to me!

HER TALKING EYES

Mollie is graduatin', an' they say she's goin' to speak
A little piece in Latin, an' another piece in Greek.
I dunno nuthin' about 'em: I'm dull as a dunce could be,
But Moll has a way of talkin' with her dear, sweet eyes, to me!

What do I keer for Latin? It's Greek to me, I say!
But I understan' the language when her bright eyes look my way!
I know she's thar', on the platform; I hear her sweet voice speak:
But her eyes—they're talkin' English to the heart that don't know Greek!

I hear the folks applaudin': I hear 'em, an' I say:
"They dunno nuthin' about the eyes that are lookin' her lover's way!"
But I read 'em; an' feel more thankful than ever my heart kin speak,
That her dear eyes talk in English to the heart that don't know Greek!

THE LITTLE ONE AWAY

World ain't like it used to be—colder skies in May;
Summer ain't so sweet to me. The little one's away!
Wish the birds a-singing could reach the ones that roam;
Wish the sweet bells ringing could ring my darling home!

Sit here in the sunshine, solemn-like—, and see
Morning glories peeping in where once she used to be;
They loved her little window, with the blossoms and the lights;
Gave her glad good mornings, kissed her sweet good-nights.

Sit here in the darkness, when no winds the maples stir,
And hear the silence singing a sad, sweet song of her;
I know the lilies dream of her, with her the roses roam,
And sunflowers shine like stars of gold and lean to light her home.

World ain't what it used to be—skies are cold and gray ;
Summer ain't as sweet to me : The little one's away !
Wish the birds a-singing could reach the ones that roam ;
Wish the glad bells ringing could ring my darling home !

WHAT THE TOYS SAID

The Hobby Horse said,
As he shook his head:
"It's a long, long ways to go
O'er the white snow's foam
To the little boy's home;
But I hear the tin horns blow,
And must race away 'till I'm out o' breath
To the Little Boy who will ride me to death!"

And the Toy Drum said:
"I've a hardened head,
And away on my sticks I'll go
From this icy dome
To the Little Boy's home—
I can beat my way through the snow!
Away! away! 'till I'm out o' breath,
To the Little Boy who will beat me to death!"

And the Toy Doll said,
As her gold-crowned head
Shone over the wintry snow:
"To the Little Girls
Of the golden curls
In a fairy coach I'll go;

Far—far away, 'till I'm out of breath,
To the Little Girls who will kiss me to death!"

But the Elephant said:
"If that way I'm led,
And they treat you all so bad,
I tell you now
That there'll be a row,
And they'll wish they never had!
For I'll pack them all in my trunk, you see,
And lock it, and throw away the key!"

MISS MARY

I miss Miss Mary fum de place;
  She take the blossom track;
I 'fraid de river steal her face
  En den won't give it back!

Fer ever' time she pass
  I heah de river say:
"Miss Mary, heah's yo' lookin'-glass—
  I wish you look dis way!"

I miss Miss Mary fum de place;
  De sun done gone ter bed;
De red rose 'low he lonesome now—
  De lily hang her head.

En ever'whar she pass
  I heah dem wil' flowers say:
"Heah's a dewdrap fer yo' lookin'-glass—
  Miss Mary, look dis way!"

WE'LL GET ON THE BRIGHTER SIDE

Toil in the cities, and till the ground;
The world is green and wide,
And some of these days, when the world turns round,
We'll get on the brighter side!

Sow and reap, and work, and weep
For the blessings that are denied;
And some of these days, in the morning's rays,
We'll get on the brighter side.

Some of these days, in the thorny ways
Will the lilies of joy abide;
The birds will sing, and the bells will ring,
And we'll get on the brighter side.

Then toil in the cities, and till the ground,
Whatever may be denied;
For some of these days, when the world turns round,
We'll get on the brighter side!

NAMING THE BABY

We jest can't git a name fer him—but I'm a-keepin' still!
Ef they name him "William Jinkins," why, they're shore to call him "Bill!"
The mother thought of "Moses," but the gracious knows
Ef she ever slaps that name to him he'll trot along as "Mose!"

The preacher said "Ezekiel" wuz the name we orter seek;
But I floored him when I tol' him they would cut it down to "Zeke!"
An' then he sprung "Jehosophat"—but still he met with loss,
Fer I tol' him, shore as preachin', they would halter him to "Hoss!"

We run all through the catalogue, but not a name we foun'
But offered fine inducements fer the folks to cut it down!

But last, the mother up en said—it made the preacher nod :—

" He's sich a heavenly blessin' we'll jest call him 'Grace o' God ! ' "

HOW THE OLD MAN WENT HOME

(John Spraddley, a Former Slave, and Faithful Servant.)

I

Three score years and ten he went
Singing along his way—content,
With never a thought or wish to roam:
"Heah's my people, en heah's my home!
Heah's de house whar de ole man bo'n—
De cotton blooms, en de fiel's er co'n;
But all but him en de house is gone!
Done crossed over de Jordan tide
En reached de home on de yuther side."
Never a thought or wish to roam:
"Heah's my people, en heah's my home!"

II

He died to-day in the old home place;
And the light that fell on his dying face
Was bright as the light of that city of white
Where never is weeping, and never night.
And the old, firm friends there, at his side,
Marvelled much as the old man died
To see the dark brows glorified!

An' he said as the light in his sight grew dim:
"I trusts de Lawd, en I friends wid Him!"
Never a thought or wish to roam:
But he found his people, and reached his home!

DAT'S MY LI'L' BOY

Don' keer how he rompin' roun'—
  Fill de house wid joy;
Le' 'm play en have his way:
  Dat's my li'l' boy!

Go ter school twell holiday,
  Wid his book en toy;
"Beats de lan'," de teacher say,
  Dat's my li'l' boy!

Mammy gittin' ol'; I spec'
  Soon she'll miss de joy
Er his a'ms eroun' her neck:
  Good-by, li'l' boy!

THE ABSENCE OF PHILIP

Sweet Laura now the cypress twines
And far her heart must roam;
For Philip's in the Philippines,
And Philip pines for home!

A lovely maiden, all forlorn,
No joy her sorrow checks;
All night she weeps, till dewey morn
Shines on the Dewey decks.

And Philip sighs from dark to dawn,
By sad misfortune schooled,
And writes eight saffron pages on
Manila wrapping (ruled).

And Laura weeps to read the lines,
And looks across the foam;
For Philip's in the Philippines,
And Philip pines for home!

THE RIPPLING OF OLD GLORY

They'd better all be keerful,
  An' look out whar they tread!
I never seen Old Glory
  A-ripplin' out so red!

She's like a million rainbows
  Way up thar on the shed,
With the stars of states a-twinklin',
  An' the old stripes ripplin' red!

Be keerful—mighty keerful!
  Thar's trouble overhead;
I never seen Old Glory
  A-ripplin' out sò red!

JUST WHISTLE

When times are bad an folks are sad
  An' gloomy day by day
Jest try your best at lookin' glad
  An' whistle 'em away.

Don't mind how troubles bristle;
Jest take a rose or thistle.
    Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

A song is worth a world o' sighs.
  When red the lightnings play,
Look for the rainbow in the skies
  An' whistle 'em away.

Don't mind how troubles bristle,
The rose comes with the thistle.
    Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

JUST WHISTLE

Each day comes with a life that's new,
  A strange, continued story,
But still beneath a bend o' blue
  The world rolls on to glory.

Don't mind how troubles bristle;
Jest take a rose or thistle.
  Hold your own
An' change your tone
An' whistle, whistle, whistle!

WHAT THE CAR WHEELS SANG

I

With a scream of the whistle our farewell said,
And into the blackness of night we sped
  On and on
  To meet the dawn,
Under the sky where the stars burned red;
Past hills that stood where the snows were shed,
Ghostly-white as the shrouded dead;
  On and on
  To meet the dawn:
True hand at the throttle and hope ahead!
  The steel rails ringing—
  The swift wheels singing:
"To kith and kin, O hearts that roam—
In vine-wreathed cot, and marble dome,
Over the world we bear you home!

II

Whirled through the dark where the black steed drives
Are joys and sorrows of human lives;
  Laughing and weeping,
  And children sleeping

On the breasts of glad mothers; and wistful wives;
The clank of chains and the grip of gyves!
On and on
To meet the dawn
Where Light the soul of the Darkness shrives!
The steel rails ringing—
The mad wheels singing:
"To gloom or gladness, O hearts that roam—
To darkened dwelling or marble dome
Over the world we bear you home!"

III

There are hearts that listen with hope and fear
For the signal shrill of the engineer:
That throb and thrill,
At that signal shrill:
Does it bring them the rose or the rue to wear?
The song, the sigh, or the burning tear?
On and on
To meet the dawn—
The black night dies, and the hills stand clear!
"What are you bringing,
O swift wheels singing—
To daisied meadow and dew-sweet loam?"

" The hearts that hunger—the hearts that roam—
Over the world we bear them home! "

IV

Old friends, old loves, in a rapture wild—
Kiss of the mother and clasp of the child:
  The night is gone—
  We have met the dawn;
Never so gladly the sweet sun smiled!
Never the spirit of Night beguiled
  The hand so true,
  That the throttle knew—
Bearing the burden of mother and child
  On and on
  To the joy o' the dawn!
With ever that song to the hearts that roam—
" To vine-wreathed cot and marble dome
Over the world we bear you home! "

MORNING AND NIGHT

We cannot know the way—
  Or if it lead to darkness, or to light;
It is but this: To see the rainbow-ray—
To dream the dream—to do the deed to-day,
  And then, good-night!

A SONG OF LIFE

No sighs for love, my hearty! There's more in life
to-day
Than weeping for a woman; Swift rolls the world
away!
The times are ever changing—brave deeds there are
to do;
Why weep, then, for a woman who will not weep
for you?

No sighs for love, my hearty—no rainy April eyes!
With all the light around you, think of a world of
sighs!
The green is on the meadow, the hills climb near the
blue;
Why weep, then, for a woman who will not weep
for you?

No tears—no sighs, my hearty! To moan, when
dark clouds pass
And let the living light out, "Alas! Alas! Alas!"
Brave rivers seaward singing—the rose o'ertops the
rue;
Why weep, then, for a woman who will not weep
for you?

Fare to the fight! The battle is for the brave and strong;
Fast flies the time, my hearty; Life is a battle song!
Stern foes are swift advancing; brave deeds there are to do;
Why weep, then, for a woman who will not weep for you?

THE CALL OF FREEDOM

When freedom calls in thunder tones,
  Far sea to sea replies,
And God the cause of freedom owns
  And thunders from the skies.

The highest law is freedom's word,
  And where her sons have bled
Each wind-swayed reed becomes a sword
  To strike oppression dead.

Holy her cause, and he who fights,
  Contending for a clod
Where freedom mourns her ruined rights,
  A hero is to God.

A PRAYER OF GIFTS

I

Give us no other art
  Than knowing to be kind;
Give us the thankful heart,
  Light where we walk so blind.

II

Give us to think no ill—
  Forgive as we're forgiven,
With earth and thy dear will
  Sweet as a dream of heaven.

TO THE FIELDS

Be thankful to the fields,
  Though summer's sweets lie dead;
It was their fleece that clothed you,
  Their green blades brought you bread.

ALONE WITH THE DREAM

Yellowed leaves and a dusty cover—
Dim and gray with the dust of years.
It was the gift of a long-lost lover—
A gift of love and a gift of tears.

A withered rose and a leaf of clover
From the beautiful gardens far away.
Is the dream of love so quickly over?
What does the heart of the woman say?

She hears the bells of the May-time ringing:
She sees the May with its blooms depart.
These were songs of her lover's singing,
But the dust is over the lover's heart.

Her first sweet love! . . . He is calling—calling
Back to the beautiful, vanished past;
Tears on the time-worn pages falling.
The woman weeps o'er the dream at last!

And was there never on earth another—
—A dearer love than the olden one?
Kissing her lips, a child cries, "Mother!"
The book is closed, and the dream is done!

A BALLAD

I am glad that my lady can weep when she will,
And thus bring the swords of the gallants to play.
Who hath broken her heart? It is adamant still;—
She will trifle their own hearts away!
Her glance can entrance, as their keen swords can kill:
I am glad that my lady can weep when she will!

I am glad that my lady can weep: She hath made
Dim eyes where the sunshine dwelt tender and bright.
I marvel, sometimes, that she is not afraid
Of the ghosts of the night!
Their pitiful faces my own heart would thrill:
I am glad that my lady can weep when she will!

She can weep—she can sigh—but the day comes apace
When the ghosts will not down! When in silence apart
She will feel the real tears on her pallid, drawn face,
And the pang at the heart!
Then the pale ghosts will triumph—and keen swords will kill:—
I am glad that my lady can weep when she will!

A SONG OF HOPE

Night, and no star
To guide the weary and the wandering feet:
And yet I know somewhere the lights shine far,
And breaks the Morning sweet.

Night, and black skies
Above the brave ships, tossing on the foam;
And yet I know somewhere the Harbor lies
Radiant with Love and Home!

Night—but for me
Still light! light! light! where darkest storms shall cease;
O lonely land! O black, tempestuous sea—
I pass from you to Peace!

ON THE MARCH

Don't know where she's goin' to—this country o' the free;
She's got the land, an' now her hand is reachin' for the sea!
Her ships on all the waters—the rollin' of her drums
Is heard where nations murmur: "She comes! She comes! She comes!"

Don't know where she's goin' to, but still she's goin' fast;
She's ready for the battle—she's bravin' every blast.
Her soldiers march in millions—the blue linked with the gray,
And the Stars and Stripes are wavin' across the world to-day!

Don't know where she's goin' to, but stormy day or night—
In peace, in strife—for death, for life our country's goin' right!
Her flag's on every ocean—the music of her drums
Is heard where nations murmur: "She comes! She comes! She comes!"

THE OFT-TOLD TALE

Thousands of years the tale is told,
And even as a day,
With all their needs, and dreams, and deeds
The centuries roll away.

But the world is ever young,
And life the future craves;
And the roses hide where the dead abide,
And the world forgets its graves.

TO A SINGER

(On Reading a Volume from Over the Sea.)

Still by the hill and glen,
  And where the cities throng,
They break the singer's heart; and then
  They glory in the song.

Come hither: lo, the woods
  Of the sun's beams are fain;
Sounds in the dreary solitudes
  The requiem of the rain.

Thy lips are ruby-red—
  Thy hands are soft and white,
And the wide world is comforted
  Of thy dear eyes of light.

Thou see'st, dear heart, afar
  The soul—the song intense,
And roamest where Faith's angels are
  In heaven's magnificence.

Lifting thine eyes above—
  Sweeping the loftier scene;
Thou see'st the pallid ghost of Love
  Over earth's graves of green.

Over earth's graves of green,
  Walled in of sand and sod;
And makest still a song serene
  That thrills the throne of God.

That thrills the faith-formed throne
  'Neath which the star-wraiths drift;
For in the ages, dark,—unknown—
  God's was the singer's gift!

Yet, with His lightnings hurled
  The darkened heavens along,
What to the rude and rushing world
  The melody of song?

Sing till the rivers sing!
  Sing till the firm hills shake!
Sing 'till the seas are answering—
  Sing till the heart shall break!

Thou shalt find little part
In earth's scant love and trust;
But for thy sweetest song, Sweetheart,
Measures of tears and dust!

Yet sing! for song is still
Of graces the one grace;
The singers who God's word fulfill
Shall see Him face to face.

Sing thou of love that lives
Where strifes and hatreds throng;
That, being wounded, still forgives—
That suffers and is strong.

No pence shall fill thy purse;
(Thy soul hath starved too long!)
For well we know gold is the curse—
The broad world's curse of song!

Sing not for worldly gain—
Sing not for dark or fair:
Sing thou in pleasure, peace and pain,
Because the song is there!

Sing brave, and be content,
When the world-thunders roll,
That in the night a great Voice sent
A message to thy soul!

For still by hill and glen,
And where the cities throng
They break the singer's heart and then
They glory in the song.

THE PASSING OF A HERO

Nat Jones had been a-readin' 'bout the novelists of late
That made enough to corner half the country's real estate;
'Bout the hundred thousand copies that the sufferin' public took,
An' says he: "I've 'bout decided I wuz born to write a book!

"It 'll help to paint the homestead, send the children all to school,
Buy Sally a pianner, take the mortgage off the mule.
Too long I've hid my talents, jest encumberin' the groun'
They'll be runnin' me fer congress ef I keep a-loafin' 'roun'!"

So, without no more considerin', says he: "I'll jest begin."
Bought a quart of ink, an' pens enough to fence the cattle in;
An' he turned out blotted pages worse than "moonshine" from the stills,
An' 'twuz jest a benediction to the busy paper mills.

But his family got anxious, an' 'twuz noticed 'roun' the town
Whatever he wuz writin' up, he kept a-thinnin' down:
With the sorrow of the ages showin' solemn in his face
He went around as mournful as a sinner lost to grace.

"I tell you, I'm in trouble"—the same wuz plain to see—
"That everlastin' hero is a-gittin' 'way with me!
In the middle o' the story, when I had him safe an' soun',
He took a dost o' pizen, an' I jest can't bring him 'roun'!"

An' the sympathizin' citizens would tell him, with a sigh,
"Perhaps the thing wuz Providence: It wuz his time to die."
An' at that he'd leave 'em, scowlin', an' sit him down again
An' resurrect that hero with one splutter o' the pen!

An' next day, when they'd meet him, with "How's yer hero's health?"
He'd smile, an' tell 'em: "Old man died an' left him lots o' wealth;
But the thing that sorter puzzles me, an' circumscribes his glory,
Is, where the old man come from—fer there warn't none in the story!

"I've got to make a place for him, but how it's to be done
Is more'n I kin tell you, 'less I start where I begun!
An' hang this novel writin'! it's a-turnin' of me gray,
An' that miserable hero'll be the death o' me some day!"

His case wuz gittin' desperate: He jest thinned down until
Doctors an' undertakers said he'd shortly fill the bill.
Some said his mind wuz failin', but the wise an' the elect
Said it couldn't be affected, since he had none to affect.

At last he seen a specialist, who told him plump an' plain
He wuz born fer exercisin' of his muscles—not his brain;
An' he listened to that sayin', an' quit a-writin' tales:
Jest throwed his hero overboard an' went to splittin' rails.

THE VOICE OF THE SOUTH

(On the Statue of Henry W. Grady, Atlanta, Ga.)

Over the wreck of his Atlanta he
  Heard music in the rills;
"New lighted, like the herald Mercury"
  On "heaven-kissing hills."

And to the North, the East, the West he said:
  "Lo! from the thunder-strife,
And from the blown, white ashes of the dead
  We rise to larger life!"

And senates listened, and the states, made one,
  Cried, with their captains grand:
"Over our glad breasts shines the same great sun,
  And God lights all the land!"

And now! . . . From this old tenement—sublime,
  Since here his steps were known—
I see him! . . . And he triumphs over time
  And looks back to his own!

Friend of humanity! Where thou must be
Do the dashed rains feel chill?
Look from thy cold, bronzed pedestal and see
Thine own Atlanta still!

Look where she comes, and hear her brave heart beat—
No more despised, disowned,
But—even while kneeling at thy sculptured feet,
A very queen enthroned!

Look where her marts are busy! where the world
Comes in its peace and pride,
And as the lightnings round thy brow are hurled,
Think! 'Twas for this you died!

Beam, lovely world! With April and with May
His deathless brow defend!
What greater man than him—content to lay
His life down for his friend?

A GEORGIA COURTSHIP

Bill Jones had been a-courtin' of Sairy-Ann—let's see :
Fer 'bout a year, I reckon, 'fore she fell in love with me ;
And Bill, he had a daddy what had money, well as lan',
And that's why Bill was hopin' that he'd marry Sairy-Ann.

In fact, the thing wuz settled ; Sairy's daddy he wuz —well,
When his cotton paid the mortgage didn't have a bale to sell ;
An' he kept a-gittin' poorer, an' goin' down the hill,
An' that's why he wuz hopin' fer a son-in-law in Bill.

One day he said to Sairy : "If Jones's Bill should say
That he's tired of livin' single, you jest let him name the day ;
He's a mighty likely feller, an' if marryin' is his plan
You'd better close the bargain while it's offerin', Sairy-Ann."

An' Sairy thought it over, an' was lovin' of him strong,
For she didn't know no better till *I* took an' come along;
An' then, 'twuz "Goodby, Billy!" It wuz plain he warn't the man
What had been predestinated fer to marry Sairy-Ann.

But he 'lowed *I'd* never do it—marry Sairy—an' he went
A-talkin' it jest thataway all round the settlement;
An' as fer Sairy's daddy—he wuz mad enough to kill,
An' he loaded up his shotgun an' said: "Sairy is fer Bill!"

Warn't any chance of meetin' with Sairy: Day by day
I kept a thinkin', thinkin' how we'd take an' run away,
But the old man knowed a trick or two what beat the tricks I knowed,
An' when it comes to *shotguns*—well, *I* don't dispute the road!

But I'd set my mind to git her, an' her mind wuz set fer me,
So I kept right on a-schemin', jest as hopeful as could be;
Fer I knowed in spite of shotguns an' bull-dogs at the gates,
That, like the tax-collector, things'll come to them what waits.

An' they *come!* 'Twuz Sairy's birthday, an' the old man—he wuz *proud!*
He give a phantom party—had the biggest kind of crowd!
There was dancin' by the fiddle, an' a lot of gals to ask,
An' at these here phantom parties everybody wears a *mask.*

I went—dressed as a woman—frills an' flounces flyin' high!
An' the way the old man met me! . . . I jest thought that I would die!
"Walk this way, ma'am! Hang yer hat up; have this rocker fer a seat!"
(An' I hadn't more'n crossed my legs 'fore some one said: "*What feet!*")

I wuz feelin' kinder curious: mule an' buggy there, outside,
An' no chance to whisper Sairy if she'd like to take a ride?
But I finally got to her, pinched her arm an' made her know,
An' when she got done laughin' she jest told me: "Yes, she'd go!"

But the old man—it wuz funny! follerin' *me* all roun' the hall!
He took a *fancy* to me! Said: "He liked a woman *tall!*"
(I wuz most afeared he'd ax me fer to *marry* him, an' so
I kept him at a distance, kaze I'd had to tell him "No!"

He talked this way: "It's lonesome fer a widower like me,
An' when Sairy-Ann gits married to Billy, where'll I be?
No one to love an' talk to when the evenin' shadders flit—
I reckon *you* ain't married?" (An' I told him: "No; not *yit!*")

He was jest about proposin' when Sairy pulled my sleeve,
An' I knowed that wuz the signal that 'twuz gittin' time to leave!
So I edged off from him quiet to the back door—open wide—
Got Sairy in the buggy an'—wuz ready fer the ride!

. . . . . .

Away we went a-dashin' through the darkness! . . . Never knowed
When I come to think it over, how that old mule kept the road!
Over stumps, an' over ditches, with a jostle an' a jolt! . . .
But Sairy's arms wuz round me, an' I hollered: "*Keep yer holt!*"

. . . . . .

There warn't nobody follerin': They hadn't missed us, an'
If they had, it didn't matter, fer they thought *I* warn't a man!
But it warn't no time fer triflin', so we kept a-flyin' still
'Till we struck the ordinary's—jest this side o' Wells's Mill.

Then we both got out the buggy: Sairy frightened, more or less,
An' *me* fishin' fer the license an'—a-gittin' out that *dress!*
An' when I'd got the muslin' an' the hoops from round my boots,
I stood 'longside of Sairy in the best of weddin' suits!

. . . . . .

We wuz married in a minute, an' in drivin' back to town
We hearn a heap of hollerin'—seen lights a-flashin' roun':
'Twas the old man's *phantom party*—stumblin' over roots
An' bridges, huntin' Sairy an' that woman with the—boots!

We drove right in the middle of the crowd—I seen it all!—
The old man—he looked daggers, an'—Bill Jones looked awful small!
But I seen the old man weaken when I told him: "Don't feel blue:
I wuz promised to your daughter, an' I *couldn't* marry *you!*"

THE SWEETEST OF MEMORY'S BELLS

Wild is the way through the woodland, but there are
the sweet fields of clover—
The sighing, sad pines and the jessamine vines and
the rill that leaps laughingly over
The lilies that rim it—the shadows that dim it; and
there, winding winsomely sweet,
Is the path that still leads to the old home through
rivery ripples of wheat!

And hark! 'tis the song of the reapers, and I know
by its jubilant ringing
There is gold in the gleam of the harvest and love in
the hearts that are singing;
And still as of old to the ether its music mellifluous
swells,
And the wind that sighs westward is swaying the
sweetest of Memory's bells!

Let me pass through the wheat and the clover—O
men and rose-maidens who reap!
I, who come from the sound of the cities, like a child
to its mother would creep;

For through long years of tears and of toiling, like harbor-bells over the foam
Your voices far winging and ringing were singing me —singing me home!

And now, from the pain and the pleasure—from the sorrow and sighing I flee
Like the birds when the storm-winds are blowing—like the ships seek the haven from sea!
And I fancy the violets know me in gardens of beauty and bliss;
And do not the red roses owe me the peace of the prodigal's kiss?

The sun is still bright at the portal; there the love-light all radiant shines;
Heart! heart! there's a face we remember in the tangle and bloom of the vines!
Far off the glad reapers are singing—far off in the rivery wheat,
And the arms of a mother are clinging, and the kiss of a mother is sweet!

RAIN

IN THE CITY

A shadow creeps to the sun, that seems
  Like a soul with a guilty stain;
A silver drop on the pavement gleams:
  Thank God for the rain, the rain!

The burning dust of the blazing street
  Is dimpled. From o'er the plain
The cool wind comes with a kiss that's sweet
  And riots along the rain!

The gamins whistle; the teamsters bare
  Their brows for a moment's space;
From sweltering casements the children stare
  At the drops in the rainy race!

And the heart of the city beats for joy,
  And the sick forget their pain:
And one looks down on a barefoot boy
  And longs for his youth again!

IN THE COUNTRY

The broad fields burn in the noonday sun
And the lily looks forlorn;
And the freshness fades from the dusty blades
Of the waveless, windless corn.

The cattle, with never a clank of bells,
Lie still by the shadowed streams;
The birds are mute in the drowsy dells,
When sudden the lightning gleams

Far off on the horizon's misty marge,
And up from the south there comes
Cloud on cloud, in a battle charge,
And the thunder rolls its drums!

And the corn grows glad and its silks are tossed,
And the lily drinks the drops
That the warring clouds in their anger lost—
Life! life! to the thirsting crops!

And one looks out from a cabin door
And then to a woman speaks:
"We'll have a harvest thet's fine, I'm shore,
Ef it jest don't rain six weeks!"

WILLIAM McKINLEY

I

Weeping skies that would seem to deplore him
Cast shadows on stars and on suns;
Drooped flags that are shivering o'er him
To a far-rolling thunder of guns!
And great bells that rock the starred steeples
And moan to the heavens above,
But dearer than all things—a people's
Devotion and love!

II

O Northland and Southland far-sighing
Your grief, in this hour unblest,
He died for his country, and dying
Was folded in Love to her breast.
In the storm of the battle he towered
A beacon—a strength to the brave,
And Freedom, low-kneeling, has showered
Her tears on his grave.